

Diary of a person who does not matter (to others)

I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be

About

Opinions about my country.

Reviews

A small Dissertation on St. Ignatius of Loyola and the clinical condition of Depression from a Hindu perspective.



The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola and their use as therapeutic tools in depressed individuals within a Hindu Indian context.

Possibilities and Impossibilities.

Dedication

for Aadrika my daughter, dearer to me than God

one day when you grow up, know your dad tried to create a different road for you

wealth, power and sex are not everything:

the spirit endures.

Information

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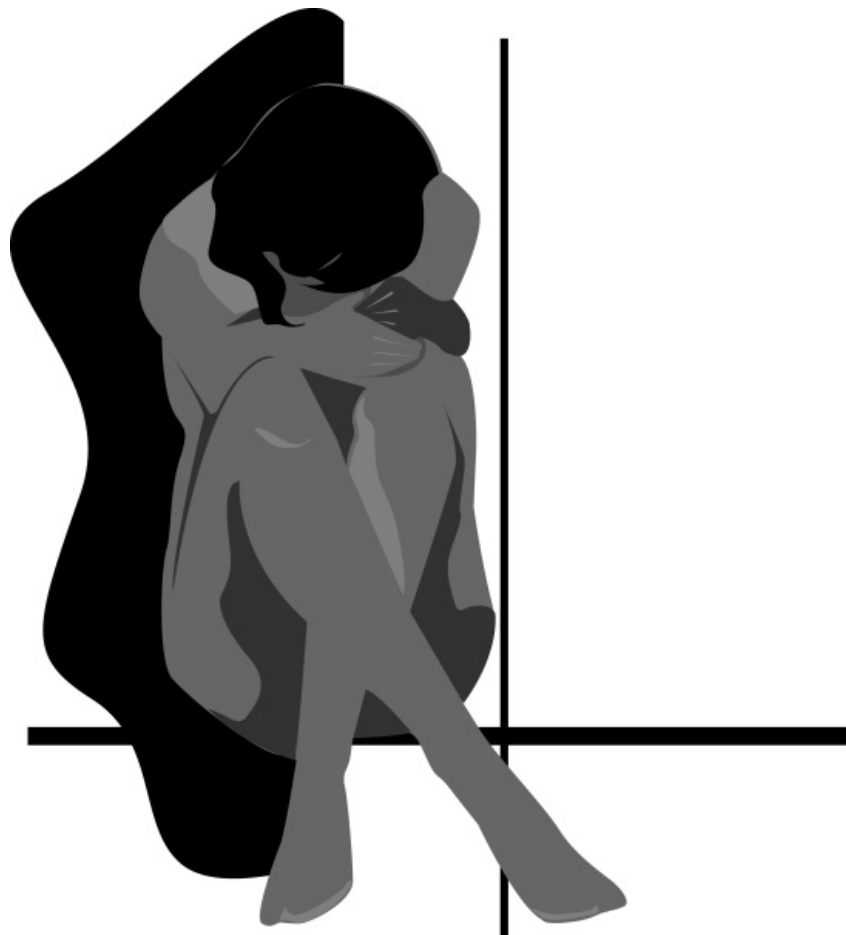
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Introduction

I chose this dissertation topic because I have always been attracted to the person of St. Ignatius of Loyola, since he alone of all Catholic Saints known to me integrated within himself the highest ideals of the Bhagavad Gita. He is the karma-yogi who through abhyasa-yoga made possible for himself and later for others, mystical experiences. His text is an Aristotelian techné or how-to-book to realize God. He makes mysticism graspable for us. This is his uniqueness. Not only was he a mystic but he ensured like the Bodhisattvas that others too through his writings attained his spiritual heights.

The Main Purpose of this Dissertation.

The aim of this dissertation is to show the usefulness of The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola in resolving intra-psychic conflicts^[1] and map a new contextualized spirituality based on the same Exercises for the Indian Hindu^[2] population. In the course of this discussion we will interrogate the possibilities of using the Exercises as therapeutic and prophylactic tools in the face of rising mental illnesses^[3] in our country and also explore the feasibility or the lack thereof adapting the Exercises^[4] to the majority population of our nation.

The limitations and the scope of this research paper:

It will be fruitful to point out that this paper is written from a Hindu perspective for the writer remains a convinced Hindu Brahmin in spite of his forays into Catholic Christianity, and having many Catholic Religious^[5] friends. Paramananda R Divarkar clearly states that:

It is now generally accepted that the aim of the Exercises is to bring the retreatant to a meaningful and transforming experience of Christ...Only the Holy Spirit can penetrate and win over to God certain areas of our lives and depth of our being where no divine commandment or evangelical counsel or ecclesial rule or personal resolution can reach. (67)

Divarkar stresses the importance of Christ and in his own manner, refers to the unconscious of Freud^[6] which he terms as the “depth of our being”. While I would only see the Christ of the Exercises as a symbol and a tool for synaesthetic therapy and

disagree with Divarkar as positing Christ as a living being active in our midst in the other-than symbolic sense; I agree with Divarkar that the Exercises have the potential to address our unconscious natures beyond our own control. This is why they form an invaluable tool in the hands of a deft psychoanalyst.

A Note on Hinduism and writing from the Hindu perspective.

Often there is a misconception that there is nothing called Hinduism, it is just a way of life which excludes tribal religions. This writer begs to differ on this issue and refers the interested reader to the works of the prolific American Indologist, the Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religion of the University of Chicago Divinity School, Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty. (Seeworks cited.) Her huge corpus established with due rigour the following facts: a) Hinduism is more than a way of life, it is a religion b) It includes tribal cults^[7] which are seen as separate from mainstream Hinduism by Christian Missionaries and c) Hinduism goes beyond the Upanishads and the Vedas; again something touted by Christian Missionaries as true Hinduism. They hardly consider, the Tantras, for example, as truly Hindu.

Wendy Doniger, in fact should be supplemented by reading the less scholarly but nonetheless honest appraisal of Arun Shourie in his factually correct book *Harvesting Our Souls* (2000) which details how Christian Missionaries in India have a habit of adapting and then regurgitating Hindu exegetes to suit their own apologetics. This writer takes the wider definitions of Hinduism posited by Doniger and Shourie instead of the grossly dumbed-down understanding of Hinduism in such polemical works as Kancha Ilaiah's provocatively titled book *Why I Am Not a Hindu: A Sudra critique of Hindutva philosophy, culture and political economy*. (1996)

Why A Freudian Approach?

I choose to pursue a decidedly Freudian^[8] approach for the simple fact that all psychological models constructed after Freud and till date are either extrapolations of Freud or are negations of his theories. For example, see Carl Rogers for anti-Freudian approaches and Lacan for rereading Freud magisterially. While I do stress the Freudian aspect in St. Ignatius's Exercises, I have more faith in, as will be evident later, chemical-imbalance models of the mind and cognition.

The Greatest Limitation.

The greatest limitation I have in writing this research paper is the limited scope in terms of the number of pages one has while fulfilling partial requirements for a Post Graduate Diploma in Formative Spirituality. I simply cannot go on expanding on issues and themes; I have to keep this paper readable. Someday when I have sufficient time I shall expand this little paper into a longer book.

Chapter 1. The Spiritual Exercises in an Indian psychiatric context.

Hugo Rahner had once remarked in a different context^[9] that great men and Ignatius were all bound by similar principles of understanding the human subject^[10]. He wrote:

The connection between all these men is far beyond literary dependence, and hence is incapable of being fitted into the categories of history based directly on sources. The connection is, so to speak, meta-historical, founded on an identity of mystical insight which inspires them — removed from each other though they are in time and space and separated from one another as to historical sources — and on an identity of fundamental ideas, which in turn are then expressed in surprisingly parallel principles.

Taking the cue from Rahner we might attempt to situate Ignatius of Loyola within the later developments in psychology and especially psychoanalytic thinking^[11]. To illustrate the feasibility of such a psychoanalytical contextualization we might consider the various Rules^[12] that we find in the Exercises. These Rules may be considered as reinforcements of the superego of Freud. Priscilla Roth^[13] in her brief study on the superego comments thus:

Everyone has a superego. Not everyone calls it a superego. Some people call it a conscience...some people call it morality. Your superego is most recognisable as...that voice inside your head which won't let you do something wrong...even when nobody else will know...the concept of the superego recognises that there is often very little

relation between what a person consciously thinks is permissible, and what the superego actually allows him or her to do. (3-4)

St. Ignatius's Spiritual Exercises concerns itself precisely with these workings of the conscience and guilt/sin. Roth further writes that for Freud

the recognition that conscience is deeply related to a sense of guilt was an important one. Guilt, here, does not mean guilt in the eyes of the law...What we are talking about is a personal sense of guilt, of feeling guilty...when from within there is a voice ceaselessly criticising and castigating us until it invades our thoughts, and our life feels entirely taken over by a sense of guilt. At these times we are forced to do something to assuage or get rid of such painful feelings: we have to try to make things better, to repair the damage... (16)

Now let us turn to St. Ignatius; Gerald Coleman in his book *Walking with Inigo*^[14] divides the earlier life of St. Ignatius post-conversion^[15] into such periods as "Phase 1: Days of Light (honeymoon period)" (Coleman 46); "Phase 2: Days of Darkness (interior turmoil)" (Coleman 48) etc. It is interesting to see what Coleman writes of Ignatius's infamous "scruples" and even the desire to commit suicide:

"Scruples" — with this one word Inigo described the extreme difficulty he was now to endure, and which, he hints, was occasioned by his "perseverance" in his practice of weekly confession...scruples come from outside us and are a temptation suggested by the evil spirit. A genuine scruple is when we think we have sinned and yet it seems we have not sinned; and we become disturbed because we cannot reach any certainty...It has been suggested by psychologists, that people who have had a religious conversion can be susceptible to scruples; the radical experience of conversion can act as a trigger. If this is so, then it is not surprising that Inigo became a victim of scruples...he was unable to cure himself... (52-53)

Now Coleman turns to the graver consequences of these "scruples":

The more he [Ignatius] thought about his predicament the more depressed he became...In fact, the temptation to end his life was so strong, and afflicted him so many times, that it is surprising that this man of action did not carry it out. (54)

Let us now synoptically turn to the definitions of depression by two very different sets of authors. Our first authors are professional clinical psychologists and the second one is a popular writer. The professional psychologists talk about negative self-concept activation and self-devaluation as hallmarks of depression:

Far greater theoretical interest is centred on the information processing believed to emanate from, and be organized by, the cognitive self-structures of which the negative self-concept is part. In cognitive theory, information processing is hypothesized to become temporarily faulty when the negative self-concept is activated. Once this activation has taken place, information that is self-devaluative is more rapidly and efficiently processed by the brain than would be the case under normal circumstances, causing depression to surface. Cognitive research on depression has similarly tended to focus on demonstrating and further elucidating distorted information processing in depressed^[16] persons and, in the case of cognitive therapy, on understanding how the dysfunctional information processing might be corrected. As a by-product of this research, support for the existence of a negative self-concept has been routinely concluded. However, while it is theorized that a negative self-concept becomes activated following an undesirable external event, research has neglected to be informative about the context of such an event. Indeed, the importance of the event is downplayed since it is seen not as a cause but as a trigger of depression (i.e., any one of hundreds of such events could serve as the trigger).^[17]

We turn now to the experience of depression as frankly articulated by the war-correspondent Mike Wallace. He writes of experiencing depression as:

"I couldn't sleep, couldn't think straight, was losing weight, and my self-esteem was disappearing,"...

Initially, he suffered in silence.

"At first, I simply didn't believe that I was depressed. My wife, Mary, did, but I didn't," he

says. "I eventually reached out to friends who had been through depression. And I talked to my general practitioner, who said, 'Mike, you don't want to let the word get out that you are depressed. That's bad for your image.' But finally, I had to face up to it."

During a recent 60 Minutes special retrospective on his career, Wallace publicly acknowledged for the first time that he tried to commit suicide, alluding to taking an excess of pills...

"When depressed, a day seems like a month," he candidly states. "I am not kidding. I was told that it could take several weeks to take hold. I thought to myself, I don't know what in the hell to do."¹⁸[my italicization]

Both the professional and amateur appraisals of depression come close to what Ignatius terms as spiritual desolation^[19] which grips one who does the Exercises. Pierre Jacob succinctly points out what Ignatius meant by desolation:

for example, gloominess of soul, inner turmoil...

disquiet from various commotions and temptations,...

finding oneself thoroughly indolent, tepid, sad and

as if separated from one's creator and Lord. (Jacob 92)

Jacob also makes the crucial link between Indian systems of thought and the Ignatian Exercises which had been entirely missed by Michael Amaladoss.^[20] Immediately after referring to Ignatius's understanding of spiritual desolation, Jacob quotes two stanzas from Rabindranath Tagore. I quote the shorter of the two (the selection of verse, I repeat is that of Jacob's):

If thou showest me not thy face,

if thou leavest me wholly aside,

I know not how I am to pass these long, rainy hours.

I keep gazing on the far-away gloom of the sky,

and my heart wanders wailing with the restless wind. (Gitanjali, XVIII)

This immediate analogy by Pierre Jacob between our Saint and Tagore helps us appropriate the Exercises to an Indian milieu. Whereas, the likes of Michael Amaladoss et al see the Ignatian Exercises as oriented solely to a Christian understanding of sin (Amaladoss 33-36), Pierre Jacob goes beyond this sin-orientation and locates the text of the Exercises within the continuum of treatises on melancholy and depression.^[21] This particular spirit of desolation has been well chronicled by writers down the ages and has been aptly termed as *acedia* and Ian Irvine^[22] defines it as "chronic ennui, alienation, estrangement, disenchantment, angst, neurosis, etc." A strong connection is made between this feeling of desolation that we find both in Ignatius and Tagore and indeed in much of contemporary literature on the subject of depression. Irvine further writes in the same article:

Early Christian descriptions of *acedia* and related vices did not view 'society' as the cause of the subjective suffering described. This is in sharp contrast to most modern descriptions of *acedia*'s progeny terms, e.g., chronic ennui, anomie, and alienation. Romantic, modernist, and postmodern uses of these words invariably encompass the idea that something is wrong with the link between the self and the 'other' of society. In this sense such concepts often represent an implicit critique of modernity. The depression, languor, and melancholy that characterised nineteenth-century ennui contradicted the great Enlightenment bourgeois ideals of progress, competition, scientific and technological advancement, and social evolution in general: ennui played gollum to the sturdy hobbit of liberalism.

Irvine links the Exercises and its meditations on the sinfulness of mankind to "the sturdy hobbit of liberalism". To this writer it appears that to the Hindu populace who, as has been earlier pointed out, only willy-nilly will accept per se that we are a sinful lot. The conception of Original Sin^[23] is non-existent in Hinduism^[24] and it is itself sinful, the paradox be noted, to call a human being sinful within the parameters of Hinduism

including such branches of Hinduism as Samkhya, Tantra and to speak nothing of Advaitist positions^[25]. The Brihadaranyaka Upaniṣad^[26], a key Upanishad, clearly states in Chapter IV:

That self is indeed Brahman, consisting of the understanding, mind, life, sight, hearing, earth, water, air, ether, light and no-light, desire and absence of desire, anger and absence of anger, righteousness and absence of righteousness and all things...

This conception of the Godhead/Brahman is very far removed from the dualistic and deist position of Ignatius who repeatedly speaks of the one who makes the Exercises as being arrayed under two standards: that of Christ and that of Satan. Such a duality is unacceptable to mainstream Hinduism. Thus the Spiritual Exercises cannot be adopted as their author intended them for specific Catholic usage and an honest integration with Hinduism as the Exercises are understood in the Catholic world is impossible.^[27] The one tenuous similarity between the Hindu corpus, especially with that verse of the Bhagavad Gita^[28]:

karmany evadhikaras te

ma phalesu kadacana

ma karma-phala-hetur bhur

ma te sango 'stv akarmani

TRANSLATION

You have a right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of action. Never consider yourself to be the cause of the results of your activities, and never be attached to not doing your duty.

and the famous Ignatian “indifference” (Ganss 151) to the results of actions, leaving them to the Will of God, seems to this writer as the one similarity which though much emphasised by Catholic exegetes is in fact over-emphasized. This is because of the linear nature of time^[29] in Christianity. The results of an action, within Christianity, are constrained by space and time and cannot recur; whereas within Hindu systems of thought, a desired result may be sought in this life or the next or some other life to come. While it is desirable to leave the results of an action to its natural consequences, the Mahanirvana Tantra^[30] makes the case for desiring the fruits of action for the latter are entwined with the desired “purusharthas”^[31].

Thus this writer, like countless other secular Hindus like him, would see in the Exercises rather a description of anomie, angst and alienation than meditations on sin. Therefore the Exercises be tentatively termed as proscriptive and in the latter weeks/portions prescriptive. While initially Ignatius asks the retreatant to meditate on her own sinfulness, yet later he moves on to how to overcome this depression. He pursues a synaesthetic approach in resolving those intra-psychic turmoils with whose reference this paper began with. In the next chapter we will see how the Ignatian Exercises can be used to overcome acedia or in our contemporary parlance, clinical depression^[32].

Chapter 2. A three-pronged approach for adapting the Exercises to an Indian milieu.

Arun Shourie who had a severely mentally and physically disabled son who died at the age of 36, has confronted the problem of pain/evil/suffering in his recent book Does He know a mother's heart?^[33] Near the end of the book he speaks of the present Dalai Lama's interest in engaging with neuro-scientists while studying religions and their effects on human minds:

The Dalai Lama has collaborated in setting up the Mind and Life Institute. Among other activities, the Institute has been organising a running dialogue between leading scientists and Buddhist scholars and savants, including the Dalai Lama. The leading scientists — front-line researchers in physics, neuroscience, and other disciplines — report the latest advances in their respective fields, and the Buddhist authorities and practitioners report what implications they see in those advances for what was experienced by Buddhist masters and is enshrined in authoritative [Buddhist] texts. In

spite of their reluctance, the Dalai Lama has encouraged Tibetan meditation masters to make themselves available to neuroscientists so that the effects of prolonged meditation on the physiology and functioning of the brain may be examined and documented. (342)

It is very important that we see mental processed in the light of not some solely mystical effusion of the soul but as an inter-play of neurotransmitters, for example of serotonin and dopamine. The accepted view today is that a lack of serotonin^[34], which may be pathological, can lead to ideations of suicide in an individual, as had been the case with Ignatius when he was tempted with committing suicide. So while the discernment of spirits^[35] according to Ignatius may not be suitable for the majority of Indians, we can use his techniques of visualising the life of Christ as a sort of art-therapy^[36] to ameliorate the conditions of depressive illnesses. Anthony de Mello S.J. perfectly understood the value of this sort of therapy without explicitly terming it as art-therapy.^[37]

This author prescribes a three pronged approach for the majority of Indians while using the Ignatian Exercises:

1. The retreatant should first be screened by a neuro-psychiatrist to rule out obsessions, psychoses and other mental complications like depersonalization disorders described in the current DSM IV manual for psychiatric illnesses. It has been proven that those who naturally incline to religious pieties might have hidden obsessive compulsions.^[38] I prefer a neuro-psychiatrist to a psychologist because of my personal conviction^[39] that treating the mind as an abstraction leads to deterioration of any psychiatric pathology. Most of what we do/think/decide or "elect" or "discern" to use Ignatian parlance is based on somatic brain pathology.^[40]
2. Secondly we must adapt and analyze the concept of evil-spirits and the stress on sin in the light of neuroses etc. rather than narrower Catholic conceptions of these. Unless the bogey-men of demonic intervention and Original Sin are amputated from the Exercises, it cannot be adapted successfully within the Hindu context of Indian ethics.



As has been shown earlier, much of what St. Ignatius would consider as misplaced desires and even sinful to allow, would be rejected per se by Hindus. I pose the following questions to bring home my points of contentions: a) How would a Catholic theologian see the rasa lila of Sri Krishna and Radha, his aunt?^[41] Is it sufficient to see it with the same hermeneutical lens as applied by Catholic exegetes^[42] while glossing The Song of Songs in the Old Testament? If such a conversion of the lust-propelled individual is to be seen only symbolically, then why does Hinduism venerate Vatsyana's Kamasutra^[43]? Sex is integral to Hinduism as has been attested by the various Puranas and the Tantras. The libidinal is prioritized in Hinduism and even onanism is allowed^[44]. These would be anathema to St. Ignatius and his followers.

3. We must use those parts of the Exercises which deal with electing to fight under the "Standard" of Christ^[45] and requires the efforts of our imaginations to relive Christ's experiences on earth. These have the potential to be developed into full-fledged psycho-therapeutic tools drawn from the emerging field of art-therapy.

Conclusions

To summarize the conclusions of this brief foray into the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola we venture to make the following points based on our observations in the preceding pages:

1. Ignatian spirituality with its initial stress on the sinfulness of humanity can serve as a therapeutic tool for depressed individuals.^[46]
2. As a Catholic corpus it is not suited to honest integration within Hinduism.^[47]
3. Its later stress on redemption through synaesthesia can be used in mental disorders^[48] as visual/sensory/tactile drama/art therapies.
4. There is tremendous potential in this text to supplement Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibiting medicines^[49] as cognitive therapy for depressed patients.
5. The very process of discernment in these Exercises need to be supervised by neuro-psychiatrists^[50] first and de-mystified as solely mystical interior colloquys divorced from chemical imbalances^[51].

Epilogue

I have tried in the preceding pages to demystify what for Saint Ignatius was an intensely mystical experience. When I compare his life with that of other Saints in all the major religions in the world; we see him mentioned repeatedly as only “that man of God”. Yet he exorcised demons, had routine visions of Jesus and the Virgin Mother of God. Yet mystical theology has neglected this man’s mystique just because he did not believe in arcana. While theologians are eager to study the interior lives of men like John of the Cross in comparison with say, Rumi, the Sufi mystic, hardly anyone bothers with Jesuit mysticism. This little dissertation is my humble contribution in trying to make this man of God better known. Unlike other Saints, except may be, Saint Catherine of Siena^[52], he tells us directly how to become saints ourselves.

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[1] Meissner, W. W. *Life and Faith: Psychological Perspectives on Religious Experience*. Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1987.

Meissner very perceptively titles the first section of his book as "Grace and the Psychology of Grace" and the chapters within it bear titles which show his determination to study the hitherto interior spiritual life as psychoanalytically and structurally verifiable. This is a monumental break from past authors. See Tanqueray, Adolphe. *The Spiritual Life*. Tan Books, 2001, for experiencing firsthand the difference that Meissner's approach brought to the critique of spiritual life. The disjunction between past conceptions of the interior life and the contemporary understanding of sanctity is well illustrated in the 1976 essay titled "Whatever became of Adolphe Tanqueray?"

See Twomey, Jerome. "Whatever Became of Adolphe Tanqueray?" *The Furrow* 27, no. 9 (September 1976). Twomey writes:

"Previous to, say, 1960, priests and religious all knew of ...a collection of spiritual writers on whom they could all fall back without having to wonder about their solidity, orthodoxy, practicality...it is also necessary to notice ...the disappearance of the same kind of overall manual conspectus in every other domains of seminary disciplines — the era of Tanqueray and Herve and George Smith, of Noldin and Genicot and Pruemmer, even of MacCaffrey and Lane, was over and nothing of a similar type has appeared since."

[2] See Amaladoss, Michael. *Inigo in India*. Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1992 for some preliminary attempts to contextualize *The Spiritual Exercises of Ignatius of Loyola*. Amaladoss hardly addresses Hindus in his otherwise excellent discussion. When he encounters mainstream Hinduism he dismisses it:

"Some contemporary strands of the Indian tradition may seem to down-play the notion of humans as sinners. Some modern Hindus like Vivekananda stress so much the divine in the human that they criticise Christians of over-emphasizing the sinfulness of the humans." (Amaladoss 39) [my underlining]

Amaladoss errs in blaming Swami Vivekananda for not stressing the sinfulness of humanity as posited by Christian theologians. Much earlier than the Swami, the Vedas have declared:

"Shrinvantu vishve amritasya putra"

Hearken, ye sons of immortality.

See Sri Chinmoy. "The Vedic Bird Of Illumination." In *The Vedas: Immortality's First Call*. Wellesley: Agni Press, 1972.

[3] See Shonali Raney, and Deniz Canel Cinarbas, "Counseling in Developing Countries: Turkey and India as Examples," *Journal of Mental Health Counseling* 27, no. 2 (2005). They write that:

"Mental health services [in India] are still in a primitive stage and availability and accessibility are lacking. As India becomes closer to being the most populated nation in the world, there is a growing concern that those who need and want counseling services are not getting services. It is, therefore, necessary for mental health counselors to consider age-old systems of medicine."

This author considers *The Spiritual Exercises* as an "age-old" system of spiritual

medicine for the mind and the soul.

[4] All further references in this dissertation to The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola is from the third edition of the masterful translation of George E. Ganss.

See Loyola, Ignatius. The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius. Translated by George E. Ganss. 3rd Indian Edition ed. Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2009.

[5]Rego, Vasco De. "Please Wake Up: The New English Missal COMMENT." E-mail message to author. September 25, 2011.

I receive countless private emails from different Catholic sources, and most of them are not impersonal ones like the one I mentioned. I carry on a dialogue through the electronic media with my Catholic Religious friends.

[6] It is interesting to note that Alex LeFrank and Maurice Giuliani speak of "The Crisis Phase" (33-65) in their book on the Exercises. This "crisis" sounds frighteningly similar to cases of depression that we encounter in Freud and have their roots in the workings of the unconscious. See works cited for their perceptive work on the Exercises.

[7]Doniger writes in her most recent book The Hindus: an Alternative History: "But I hope to bring in more actors, and more stories, upon the stage, to show the presence of brilliant and creative thinkers entirely off the track beaten by Brahmin Sanskritists and of diverse voices..." (p.2) Whereas for the ilk of illaiah, Hinduism perversely eludes the lower castes, true scholarship refutes his position as mere polemics. I cannot only blame Christian polemicists in isolating tribal communities from mainstream Hinduism; this has also been done by the Government of India. This is what Arudhuti Roy has to say about our tribal populations:

"...[the tribals] are a furious people who have been deliberately isolated and marginalized by the Indian government...[The Constitution of India] denied them their traditional rights to forest produce, it criminalized a whole way of life. In exchange for the right to vote it snatched away their right to livelihood and dignity." (7-8)

[8] "...psychoanalysis had become the single most prominent school of psychology and psychotherapy in the world, one capable of attracting a steady stream of students and followers not only from the medical specialties but also from the arts and humanities...Freud's own stature had grown in proportion to the latent scientific and philosophical dimensions that had informed the topic of neurosis from the start."

See Kerr, John. Introduction. In A Most Dangerous Method: the Story of Jung, Freud, and Sabina Spielrein, 7. New York: Vintage Books, 2008.

[9] Hugo Rahner (cited in Coleman, see Works Cited) was referring to other great men of the Church whereas here we will evaluate Ignatius's corpus with decidedly secular men like Freud et al who thought religion to be a neurosis of sorts. See David Meghnagi, ed., Freud and Judaism (London: Karnac Books, 1993).

[10] See Hugo Rahner, S.J., The Spirituality of St. Ignatius Loyola: an Account of its Historical Development, tr. Francis John Smith, S.J.(Westminster, 1953), pp.58-59. cited by Coleman.

[11] See Wright, Elizabeth. Psychoanalytic Criticism: a Reappraisal. New York: Routledge, 1998. This book very lucidly presents the main currents of psychoanalytic criticism accessible to the lay-reader.

[12] See for example, "Rules to Order Oneself henceforth in the taking of Food" (Ganss 88-89)

[13] See Roth, Priscilla Lenore. The Superego. Cambridge: Icon Books, 2001.

[14] See Coleman, Gerald. Walking with Inigo: a Commentary on the Autobiography of St. Ignatius. Anand, India: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2002. This book is an indispensable source on the interior life of St. Ignatius. Coleman nowhere mentions Freud, but a close reading of his book and the Freudian corpus will show how they are both concerned with the unconscious workings of the human mind. While Freud chose ordinary people, Coleman chooses the interior life of a Saint.

[15] For a very readable life of the Saint see Rose, Stewart. St. Ignatius Loyola and the

Early Jesuits. London: Burns and Oates, 1891. This book seems to be dated yet it reads like an engrossing novel without distorting any fact about the Saint and his early Companions.

[16] "Coupled with the word discernment is that other peculiarly Ignatian word, magis...the word has been mistaken to mean that Ignatian spirituality calls for constantly giving more and more of oneself in a kind of messianic enthusiasm that can lead to burnout. Nothing can be further from Ignatius's mind. Seeking the magis in Ignatian spirituality means paying attention to means and ends and discerning what is more conducive to achieving the end results desired. It's a matter of discriminating between options and choosing the better of the two. (Burnout is not a reasonable option.) Thus one prays over one's choices, looks at one's gifts, considers the needs, and then decides where can one do the greater good."

See Modras, Ronald E. Ignatian Humanism: a Dynamic Spirituality for the 21st Century. Chicago: Loyola Press, 2004, p.49. Depressed patients have burnouts and this concept of magis should be applied to contemporary workaholics and perfectionists as a liveable substitute. The application of such a system for substituting burnouts is open to exploration by psychoanalysts.

[17] Drew, Mary L., Keih S. Dobson, and Henderikus J. Stam. "The Negative Self-concept in Clinical Depression: A Discourse Analysis." Canadian Psychology/Psychologie Canadienne 40, no. 2 (1999): 192-204.

[18] See Patrick Perry, "Mike Wallace: Speaking out on Depression," The Saturday Evening Post, September/October 2006, for a frank and heart-wrenching, yet accurate description of suffering through depression. Notice how Wallace too like St. Ignatius contemplated suicide.

[19] See Jacob, Pierre. Ignatian Discernment: a Commentary of the Rules of Discernment and the Autobiography of Ignatius of Loyola. Anand, India: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2001. This book goes beyond Meissner to intricately analyse the Exercises in specific Freudian terminology.

[20] See footnote 2 above to comprehend Amaladoss's misunderstanding and misrepresentation of Hinduism and Hindu philosophy.

[21] See Boethius. Boethius, the Consolations of Music, Logic, Theology, and Philosophy. Translated by Henry Chadwick. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981. This ancient text is a metaphysical treatise on what would later be known as MDD (Major Depressive Disorder). It is pre-Christian man's search for the meaning of melancholy, its origins and possible cures.

[22] See Ian Irvine, "Acedia, Tristitia and Sloth: Early Christian Forerunners to Chronic Ennui," Humanitas 12, no. 1 (1999): 89

[23] For a very readable understanding of Original Sin as understood by Catholic theologians see Edward T. Oakes, "Original Sin: A Disputation," First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life, November 1998. Oakes clearly delineates the importance of the value of Original Sin as a concept within Catholic dogma which would not be disputed by Ignatius of Loyola, that faithful servant of the Church militant. Oakes writes:

"No doctrine inside the precincts of the Christian Church is received with greater reserve and hesitation, even to the point of outright denial, than the doctrine of original sin. Of course in a secular culture like ours, any number of Christian doctrines will be disputed by outsiders, from the existence of God to the resurrection of Jesus. But even in those denominations that pride themselves on their adherence to the orthodox dogmas of the once-universal Church, the doctrine of original sin is met with either embarrassed silence, outright denial, or at a minimum a kind of halfhearted lip service that does not exactly deny the doctrine but has no idea how to place it inside the devout life. Even the Universal Catechism of the Catholic Church, surprisingly enough, calls original sin a "sin" only in an analogous sense (#404), because unlike other (presumably real?) sins it is only contracted and not committed—a concession that would certainly have surprised Augustine, who had a vivid and almost physical/biological understanding of the First Sin."

This emphasis on the sinfulness is missing in all branches of Hinduism.

[24] For the concept of non-evil/non-sinfulness in Hinduism see Doniger, Wendy. *The Origins of Evil in Hindu Mythology*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976. Her translations of the Rig Veda is worth minute study. This reveals that Hinduism does not have any conception of sin per se but from the perspectives of various schools of Hindu thoughts some actions may be construed as wrong, rather than immoral. But I emphasise the point that this perceived wrongness is from a particular angle and not an absolute. See Doniger, Wendy. *The Rig Veda: an Anthology : One Hundred and Eight Hymns*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1983.

[25] For understanding the various branches of Hinduism see Radhakrishnan, S. *The Hindu View of Life; Upton Lectures Delivered at Manchester College, Oxford, 1926,*. London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1927.

[26] See Radhakrishnan, S. *The Principal Upaniṣads*. New York: Harper, 1953.

[27] For a very lucid summing up of the Spiritual Exercises as the culmination of a long line of medieval and Renaissance spiritual commentaries see Stanley, David Michael. "John's Gospel and the Ignatian Exercises." In "I Encountered God!": the Spiritual Exercises with the Gospel of Saint John, 3-40. St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources in Cooperation with Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, Anand Press, 1986.

[28] See His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. "Bhagavad Gita As It Is, 2: Contents of the Gita Summarized, Text 47." In *Bhagavad Gita As It Is*. Macmillan, 1972.

[29] See Gregory E. Ganssle and David M. Woodruff, eds., *God and Time: Essays on the Divine Nature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002) for an excellent discussion on time and its linear nature within Christian theology.

[30] Woodroffe, John George, trans. *Tantra of the Great Liberation = Mahānirvāna Tantra : a Translation from the Sanskrit, with Introduction and Commentary*. New York: Dover Publications, 1972. This translation and commentary on the Mahanirvana Tantra remains unsurpassed even today.

[31] For a brief and precise discussion on the "purusharthas" see Priya Rajeev, "Wisdom from Ancient Indian Philosophy for the Corporate World," *International Management Review* 3, no. 1 (2007).

[32] See "Major Depressive Episode: DSM IV Diagnosis." *Mental Health Today – Books, Communities, Education*. Accessed September 21, 2011. <http://www.mental-health-today.com/dep/dsm.htm>. This website gives a quick review of what constitutes major depressive disorder.

For an in-depth analysis of the nature of depression, see Baldwin, David S., and Jon Birtwistle. *An Atlas of Depression*. New York: Parthenon Pub. Group, 2002. This book is indispensable for any serious study of contemporary understanding of depression.

[33] Shourie, Arun. *Does He Know a Mother's Heart?: How Suffering Refutes Religions*. New Delhi: Harper Collins Publishers India, a Joint Venture with the India Today Group, 2011. Shourie comes to the interesting conclusion, which to this author is a truism shirked by theologians of all religions, that if God is all Love then he possibly could not allow intolerable sufferings to occur. At the level of faith and apologetics we can justify suffering but at the level of rationality, any suffering is only mysterious and inexplicable.

[34] See David R. Diaz, and Maria C. Poor, "The Role of Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors in the Treatment of Psychiatric Illness: An Update," *Annals of the American Psychotherapy Association* 12, no. 3 (2009). These authors illustrate the role of serotonin in suicide-ideations. Their paper proves that low serotonin levels lead to higher suicide rates.

[35] See Meissner, W. W. *To the Greater Glory: a Psychological Study of Ignatian Spirituality*. Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 1999. This is the best book of its kind dealing with the psychology of discernment in the light of St. Ignatius of Loyola's Spiritual Exercises.

[36] See Knill, Paolo J., Ellen G. Levine, and Stephen K. Levine. *Principles and Practice of Expressive Arts Therapy: toward a Therapeutic Aesthetics*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2005. This book addresses the emerging field of art/drama as therapies for mental illnesses.

Also see Laura G. Hensley, "Treatment for Survivors of Rape: Issues and Interventions," *Journal of Mental Health Counseling* 24, no. 4 (2002) for a concise attempt at constructing and reviewing the therapeutic effects of art and exposure to expressive visual arts.

These two references will offer us starting points in our search for Ignatius's dicta of synaesthetically imagine the locale of the Galilean, His crucial life events and even the smells surrounding Him.

[37] See De, Mello Anthony. *Contact with God: Retreat Conferences*. Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1991. In this book Fr Anthony stresses the effect of touch, for example. He exhorts the retreatant to feel the contours of a cup much in the same way as the French philosopher Lacan saw "jouissance" as essentially orgasmic and phallic. The ultimate ecstasy or the inflaming of the heart after proper election during the Ignatian retreat leads to a similar kind of orgiastic inner joy, notwithstanding the avoidance of Catholic writers in equating mysticism with sexual pleasure.

For a discussion on the relation of sexuality and mysticism, gradually attained, as was in the case of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, see Weldon, Estela V. *Sadomasochism*. Cambridge: Icon Books, 2002.

[38] For understanding the relationship between religion and compulsive obsessive disorders read the latter part of the following essay: Christine Lochner et al. , "Cluster Analysis of Obsessive-compulsive Symptomatology: Identifying Obsessive-compulsive Disorder Subtypes," *The Israel Journal of Psychiatry and Related Sciences* 45, no. 3 (2008).

[39] The psychologist Peter Kramer gave up counselling as a therapeutic practice simply because he was getting nowhere with his patients till he started prescribing them Fluoxetine. He rejected talk-therapy as only trivial compared to Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors. See his eminently readable bestseller: Kramer, Peter D. *Listening to Prozac*. New York: Penguin Books, 1997.

[40] There are two books which conclusively prove the near-uselessness of all sorts of psychotherapies: 1) Sacks, Oliver W. *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat and Other Clinical Tales*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1998. & 2) Ramachandran, V. S. *The Tell-tale Brain: a Neuroscientist's Quest for What Makes Us Human*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2011.

I cannot here but refer to a very recent blog-post by a Jesuit. I quote him in toto:

The History of the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ—

by Fr. JAMES Groenings, S. J.

"Devotional in character; of value for purposes of meditation and preaching. The author follows the biblical account, and approved commentators.

He "has thought it wise not to draw from private revelations no matter how venerable the names connected with them may be. Since it is difficult to distinguish between what is in reality revealed in these revelations and what is the result of pious meditation, the author judged it more in accordance with his very calling as teacher and interpreter of the Gospel to rely solely on the Gospel narratives and the interpretation by the Fathers and by men scientifically trained for that purpose."

In this Father Groenings reflects the spirit of the Society to which he belongs. And it is precisely this fact which makes one feel secure, in picking up a devotional work with "S.J." on the title page, that it is going to be solid and Catholic. It is to be hoped that this book will drive out of the market a fearful example of how these matters should not be handled which was inflicted on the American Catholic public a year or two ago."

See Fromm, Joseph. "'S.J.' Solid and Catholic." *Good Jesuit, Bad Jesuit* (web log), September 19, 2011.

Accessed September 21, 2011. <http://goodjesuitbadjesuit.blogspot.com/2011/09/sj-solid-and-catholic.html>.

My point here is that as the blog-post indicates, Saint Ignatius would be the first man to put to practical use advances in neuro-psychiatry. Thus I see hardly any need for great personal effort to rid oneself of erstwhile sins like sloth, acedia et al.

[41] See Sarma, Deepak. *Hinduism: a Reader*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub., 2008. This book covers most aspects of Hinduism.

[42] See Richard A. Norris, ed., *The Song of Songs: Interpreted by Early Christian and Medieval Commentators* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2003), xiv. This text is typical of the way that Church Fathers glossed this Old testament book.

[43] "The Kamasutra is the oldest extant Hindu textbook of erotic love, and one of the oldest in the world. It is not, as most people think, a book about the positions in sexual intercourse. It is a book about the art of living—finding a partner, maintaining power in a marriage, committing adultery, living as or with a courtesan, using drugs—and also about the positions in sexual intercourse."

See Wendy Doniger, "Reading the 'Kamasutra': The Strange & the Familiar," *Daedalus* 136, no. 2 (2007). No stretch of the imagination can equate this with the Song of Songs' interpretations.

[44] See this slim novel: Kakar, Sudhir. *The Ascetic of Desire*. Woodstock (N.Y.): Overlook Press, 2002. This book is a fictional retelling of the life of Vatsyana and yet is replete with historical research. For the acceptance of masturbation within Hinduism see Alan Hunt, and Bruce Curtis, "A Genealogy of the Genital Kiss: Oral Sex in the Twentieth Century," *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality* 15, no. 2 (2006) and how masturbation was allowed but seen as unmanly see Patrick Olivelle, "Young Svetaketu: A Literary Study of an Upanisadic Story," *The Journal of the American Oriental Society* 119, no. 1 (1999).

[45] Ignatius speaks of the Call of the King. This sort of direct call is what would constitute a call to come out of interior torpor. Of course, Ignatius's own guide was God (see Rodrigues in Works Cited):

"The special gifts of the Spirit to Ignatius were, then, to see how the Lord was directing him. He discovered the direction of the spirits chiefly by discerning the direction of his own desires. Where they came from, where they were leading to, and how they affected his personal interior disposition. Desires from the Holy Spirit affected his disposition very differently from those coming from the evil spirit or his own natural inclinations." (15)

[46] I have only skimmed the surface of the Exercises teasing out one or two possibilities to create a framework for future extrapolation which should require the expertise of an Ignatian retreat-guide, a psychologist and a neuro-psychiatrist.

[47] See what I mean by Hinduism by referring to the Introduction to this paper and Works Cited below for books by both Doniger and Shourie.

[48] I have primarily dealt with Major Depressive Disorder, but the treatment of this single instance of this global epidemic can be used to work on other mental problems like bi-polar mania and schizophrenia. These are beyond the scope of this work.

[49] See Richard J. Davidson, Diego Pizzagalli, Jack B. Nitschke, and Katherine Putnam, "Depression: Perspectives from Affective Neuroscience," *Annual Review of Psychology* (2002) for the importance of SSRIs in clinical depression. Talk-therapy is now considered supplementary to SSRI drugs.

[50] For brilliant rebuttals of my heavy reliance on chemicals as ultimate purveyors of decision-making see the self-confessed atheist, Raymond Tallis' massive corpus. I just cite one such book in the bibliography.

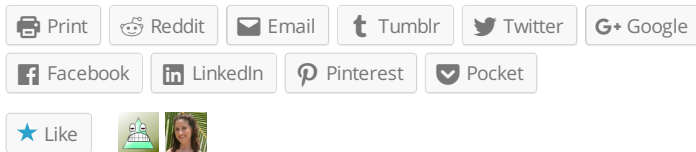
[51] "The factor that we cannot control readily is brain chemistry. So it stands to reason that brain chemistry alterations arising from structural and coordination problems bring on most of the unusual mind states seen in mental illness. But most of these alterations are not really all that strange. Indeed, most are well

known in other guises. We get many anxiety disorders by applying the chemistry of the conditioned fear response to the wrong cues. We arrive at major depression through the chemistry of grief. And we produce the various psychoses by shifting the brain's chemistry in the direction of REM sleep."

See J. Allan Hobson, and Jonathan A. Leonard, *Out of Its Mind: Psychiatry in Crisis : a Call for Reform* (Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing, 2001), 241.

[52] See Siena, Catherine. *The Dialogue*. Translated by Suzanne Noffke. Classics of Western Spirituality. New York: Paulist Press, 1980. These letters and St. Catherine's interior colloquys have great similarities with St. Ignatius's Exercises and own visions. Both Saints were very bold for their times and stations in life. The study of their similarities and differences is beyond the scope of this work. I look forward to other scholars's efforts to situate St. Ignatius within the mainstream of Catholic and world mysticism. Our Saint under consideration is not generally accepted as a mystic at par with say, Saints John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila.

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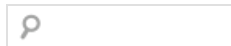
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